

3

(c) a controller electrically coupled between said electrodes of said cell and said terminals of said container to form, from the cell voltage, an output voltage across the positive and negative terminals of the container; and

D/ed

(d) a circuit responsive to a predetermined condition of said battery, the circuit being operable to uncouple the output voltage of the controller from the terminals of the container upon detection of said predetermined condition substantially determined by said internal impedance.

24. A method for extending the useful life of a battery comprising the steps of: providing a battery having a controller suitable for use in batteries including a primary battery and a secondary battery, said battery including:

D/ed

(1) a container having a positive terminal and a negative terminal; and
(ii) a battery cell having an internal impedance disposed within said container; said cell having a positive electrode, a negative electrode, and a cell voltage measured across said positive and said negative electrodes of said cell;

the method being characterized by:
electrically coupling a controller between said electrodes of said cell and said terminals of said container to form, from the cell voltage, an output voltage across the positive and negative terminals of the container

in response to detection of a predetermined condition of the battery substantially determined by said internal impedance, uncoupling the output voltage of the controller from the terminals of the container.

REMARKS

Claims 1-11, 24-27 are rejected in this Application. Claims 12, 14-22, 28 and 29 have been allowed.

In the Office Action of May 15, 2001, the Examiner states the following:

Applicant submits that the claimed invention, in reciting use for both primary and secondary batteries, further separates from Nagai which is allegedly limited to rechargeable, i.e. secondary batteries. However, the examiner notes that the instant claims recite "either" a primary or secondary battery, not "both". Thus, Nagai, is fully applicable within the